

# Japan Christian Activity News

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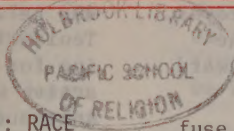
BY NCC J

Editor:

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## MINORITIES UNITE FOR THEIR RIGHTS: RACE AND MINORITY TEAM MEETS IN KOBE

As a follow-up of the Christian Conference of Asia Urban Rural Mission Deli Consultation in March of this year, a special team on race and minority issues met in Kobe from Oct. 21 to 24. This international group also visited Tokyo and Osaka to meet with Japanese people concerned with minority issues. The Tamil in Sri Lanka, the Maori of New Zealand, the Australian aborigines, the untouchables of India, the mountain tribes of the Philippines and the Chinese in Indonesia were represented, either by members of the minorities themselves or by people concerned with problems of discrimination against them.

SHOJI Tsutomu, speaking for the Buraku minority in Japan, reported that the exchange of information about the struggle for human rights and the sharing of difficulties encouraged them and resulted in a strong sense of strength and solidarity. The Okinawa issue and the Ainu issue were mentioned for the first time in this kind of international setting. In Hokkaido, Ainu face problems similar to those of the Maoris in New Zealand. They have both been deprived of their rich lands and have been given very barren lands not suitable for agriculture (nor for their traditional hunting and fishing life-style) in exchange.

Similarly, the Buraku of Japan and the untouchables of India have certain aspects of their situation in common. Neither group is ethnically different from the mainstream, but they are discriminated against for political, economic, cultural or religious reasons.

The Koreans in Japan and the Tamil in Sri Lanka likewise have a similar history. The Koreans were brought to Japan as forced labor in the mines; in much the same way the Tamil people became laborers on the tea plantations in Sri Lanka. Today both the Koreans in Japan and the Tamil in Sri Lanka are threatened with deportation and loss of citizenship if they re-

fuse to give up their identity as a minority group.

The Kobe Consultation negotiated an exchange next February between the Burakumin in Japan and the untouchables in India. Two years ago the untouchables sent two delegates to Japan. Exchanges between the Ainu and Maoris are anticipated in the future when the stance of the Ainus becomes clearer. One of the church's tasks is to bridge the distance between minority groups in the countries of Asia.

The group also decided to hold a people's forum on land issues next year, for all of the minority issues are in some way concerned with land. In Japan the Ainu issue is essentially a land issue. The Burakumin used to be forced to live under dangerous cliffs, along rivers which overflow during floods and on the edges of cities. Koreans were deprived of their land when they were brought to Japan.

(continued on p. 2)

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(Minorities Unite, cont...)

Recently, due to the technology of transnational corporations, a new land issue has been developing in Asia. Minorities are deprived of their land and their natural and cultural resources are destroyed. Governments in Asia tend to ignore the rights of such powerless groups and award land to large corporations.

At the Kobe meeting there was not only solidarity expressed across national boundaries, but within Japan as well. Rev. LEE In Ha, pastor of Kawasaki Korean Christian Church in Japan and director of RAIK (Research Action Institute for Koreans in Japan) said that in September he spoke at a rally on the Burakumin issue in Nagoya. 20,000 people were present- representatives of Koreans, the disabled, Ainu, Okinawans and women's groups. They all expressed solidarity with Burakumin and offered their support. In July, Mr. IMAI Kazuichi, NCC Buraku Committee member and Kyodan Buraku Committee Staff member, went to Hokkaido for dialogue with the Ainu people there and was encouraged by the exchange. In the future there will be many more such chances for dialogue, both in Japan and between the countries of Asia.#

## FINDING THE JOY OF SOLIDARITY AMONG MINORITIES

On October 25 there was a large gathering at the outdoor music hall in Hibiya Park, Tokyo, calling for the cessation of the atomic power plant operations and the discharge of radioactive waste into the Pacific Ocean, and opposing Japan's nuclear armament. Mick MILLER, who attended the recent conference on race and minority issues in Kobe sponsored by the CCA- Urban Rural Mission, came to the meeting representing the Australian aborigines. When Mick appeared on the stage everybody enthusiastically applauded. Suddenly, TV cameramen were gathered around him. No one could even get a glimpse of him. Mick explained to the audience how inhumanely the aborigines are treated and why they are suppressed. Calling for the solidarity of people who are oppressed, he emphatically stated, "Here with me are two friends from the Mariana Islands along with Japanese and Filipino friends. As long as I talk about the nuclear problems in Australia, they are only local incidents. However, when friends who are also suffering in similar situations are united something very significant and new comes out of it."

After the two hour meeting the group held a demonstration on a downtown Tokyo street. Mick stood in the front line with a big sign saying, "Do Not Discharge Nuclear Waste into the Ocean." The next day he was with Mayor Felipe MENDIOLA of Tenian Island, Micronesia, who was appealing for a stop to the dumping of radioactive waste into the Pacific Ocean. Anti-nuclear citizens' groups were present and everyone enjoyed the deepened feeling of unity as well as the fellowship. At that time I met a labor union leader who shared this experience with me:

"If I wanted to live a comfortable life, I would join a company union. Immediately my salary would go up and my future would be promising. But I question the happiness which is built on the sacrifice of other people's lives, and prosperity which threatens others. In Tokyo, which looks so peaceful, a group of gangsters invaded our union office. They brutally cut off a worker's fingers. This was not publicized on TV because of pressure from the company.

However, I was so glad to see here a representative who stood on the stage of the music hall speaking out for minorities. We workers who form our own union are a minority in this advanced, industrialized nation. Minorities are bound together by the common experience of suffering."

The presence of such people in this meeting assured me that the light of hope for solidarity among minorities from the Pacific Islands, Japan and Australia would continue to burn.#

(Y. J. Kanzaki)

## -----STATISTICS-----

In 1979 18% (¥16,141,000) of the income for NCCJ came from NCCJ membership fees. However, this 18% only covered the expenditure for staff salaries. The six denominations who are members (140,000 people) paid 58.6% of this total fee. 29.6% was paid by eight Christian groups. 11.8% was paid by 16 associate member churches and organizations.





By Song Boo Jea

*The following is a testimony given by Song Boo Jea in one of the sessions of the Consultation on Race and Minority Issues.*

I am a second generation Korean in Japan. I did not know how to read my real Korean name until I was 30 years old. I felt sad when others said to me that I looked like a Japanese since I wanted to become Japanese.

Five years ago my eldest son went to Dr. In Ha's kindergarten in the Korean Kawasaki Church. In a parents' meeting Dr. In Ha said that the use of our real Korean names represented individual personhood. Everything I heard that night was new, and it was a shocking experience for me. From that time on I became interested in the church and later I was baptized.

I realized the importance of making an effort to learn more about my heritage rather than feeling shame at my ignorance. I felt a sense of freedom within me. Although my husband objected, three of the children and I decided to use our Korean names instead of reading the names in Japanese. It was not easy to change our names in everyday life.

We live in the most polluted part of the Kawasaki industrial area. I have been a member of the mothers' group of the nursery-kindergarten of the Kawasaki church for the last six years. This group is for the mothers of Korean residents in Japan. Its purpose is to discuss ways of encouraging Korean children living among the Japanese. Statistically, the population of Koreans in Japan is 670,000, although it is said that the total number is one million, including Koreans who are naturalized Japanese citizens and illegal entrants into Japan. 100,000 children of some 130,000 are studying in Japanese schools. There are Korean schools but they are not recognized by the Ministry of Education. Jobs which the Koreans can find working as junk collectors, dump truck drivers, physical laborers, game center attendants and restaurant workers are those jobs which the Japanese do not want.

Koreans in Japan are required to pay the same taxes as the Japanese. While the Japanese can receive about 200 kinds of social security and social welfare benefits, the Koreans in Japan only qualify

for the livelihood protection laws (there is much red tape involved), health insurance and public housing. It is very difficult for the Koreans in Japan to live as self-determining individuals. Mothers' hearts are filled with complex emotions when they see their four and five-year-old children cry out, "Why did we have to be born as Koreans in Japan?"

A four-year-old child who learned the Korean language went out and used some Korean words. He was teased by the other children, and he never again would use Korean. When a six-year-old child of Korean background enters the first grade using a Japanese name and sits side by side with Japanese children, the personhood of this child is completely negated. There should be only one name for a child, since the name indicates the totality of the person. Children who use their Korean names in Japan are sometimes mercilessly teased and they often change to the Japanese reading. In 1979 a 12-year-old boy jumped from the tenth floor of an apartment building because he was abused by other children in school. When the teacher told about his death in the classroom some shouted out, "Banzai," holding both arms up high. Many Korean children are killed by words which wound like a sharp knife when used by other children.

Many Korean children are forced to change schools because of violence against them. Many children become delinquent without hope for the future. The Japanese teachers pretend not to know the difficulties which the Korean children are facing. The same attitude can be seen among the Christians in Japan. I believe that those who are not concerned with Korean problems are the people who are helping to discriminate against the Koreans.

The mothers' group in the Kawasaki Church is small. But they are studying many social issues for training in sensitivity toward many other kinds of discrimination in society. As a group project we confronted a large credit union which discriminated against people who used Korean names. We requested them to eliminate the nationality regulation from their company rules, so that all nationalities could apply for membership in the credit union. From this struggle we learned that discrimination exists systematically in society in many forms.

Our theme is to encourage children to grow strong, undefeated by discrimination and not practicing discrimination against



others. I was born in Japan and have grown up here. I love Japan and the Japanese, so I feel I have a task to inform friends as to the dangerous direction this society is moving in. Even in the world of children, war is idealized and movies and comic books are filled with violence and war. I pray for God's guidance in building peace and bringing justice to the world. This task is the responsibility of parents and of individuals whatever their national origin. #

## A VIEW FROM SARAWAK

*In a Movie Theater*



*Rev. ARAI Juntaro, a missionary of the United Church of Christ in Japan, is presently serving at Methodist Theological School, Sibü, Sarawak. The following is a summary/ translation of a letter which appeared in the November issue of "Fukuin to Sekai."*

Sibü is a small town of 85,000 in East Malaysia. One TV channel controlled by the government runs from 6:00 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. Since other kinds of recreation are very scarce, people like to go to movie theaters. In this town there are eight theaters showing movies from Malay, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indonesia, Thailand, India, Japan, the USA and European countries.

There are several ticket prices, but for a good movie during holidays, the ticket must be purchased in advance. It is very interesting to observe people's reactions during showings. Almost every movie is translated into three languages: Chinese, English and Malay. Subtitles are written on the screen.

Ibon people who live in local areas also like movies, and whenever they have a chance to go to town they see a movie. They live in long houses; several families form a community. Because of government assistance they have electric generators and enjoy fluorescent lights from sunset to 9:00 p.m., and more TV antennas are going up on these long houses. Long houses beside the river banks use electricity from a Chinese-owned boat whenever the boat comes in. Even when the Ibon people don't understand the language on the movie screen, someone translates for them, and they have a good time together.

Last August 15, the anniversary of the end of WWII, I saw a war documentary, "Rising Sun." This was a film of World War I and II using U.S. resources and films. The Japanese military invasion into China and other parts of Southeast Asia were well described, but the scenes from the rape of Nanking were cut out. The next movie which I saw was the history of the Pacific War. Both were documentaries in the Chinese language, a most of the audience was Chinese. I could hear everybody's audible sighs whenever the Japanese attacked their motherland, or the camera showed the starvation scenes of the prisoners.

When the map on the screen showed the Japanese military invasion spreading over China, the Pacific Islands and other Southeast Asian countries, the theater was filled with the sound of a loud, ....!" At the same time I could not hide my own surprise, because the map of the military invasion on the screen was the same as a map of Japan's present economic invasion of Asia would be. The fact not only startled me, but I found that to my surprise, I came to see reality from the standpoint of a person of Sarawak, Borneo. In other words, I was looking at the map from the side of the invaders rather than from the viewpoint of the invaded. I felt that I understood little about the feelings of Asian people who once were trampled upon by military boots and now are confronted by the civilian uniform of the same economic power. The map appealed to me as a symbol of my life with the people in the theater who were being threatened. At the same time, with a great shock I awakened to the fact that I was the only Japanese in the crowd.

Another time when I saw a movie made in Japan, "Number Eight Brothel in Borneo" I could not forget the scene of an old man saying with anger in his voice that "The Japanese were the people who once destroyed our country and families, and now they only think about how to exploit our country and make money. I don't like such Japanese." The movie was the story of Japanese women who were used as prostitutes in Borneo and died a very lonely death. Once I visited the cemetery of these women and noticed that none of the grave stones were looking towards Japan but were facing to the south as if all of the dead were agreeing with the old man's words in the movie. If I should see this movie in Japan, the same tears



anger would probably not well up in my  
t, as they did here.

concern of people here is not only  
n's economic invasion of other Asian  
tries, but the retrogression of polit-  
al policies in Japan is also a worry.  
ough the people here are not freely  
icipating in criticism of the Japanese  
rnment policies, they have never for-  
en what happened in this country dur-  
the war.

local English newspaper reported on  
erection of the monument for class A  
criminals of World War II in Tokyo,  
n over the objections of many citi-  
s. This news appeared in the paper  
t after NCCJ news on this subject  
ched us.

an see the reality of what the Jap-  
sé did during the war more objectively  
n the jungles of Borneo. The Japanese  
e not noticeably changed in the last  
years. They still skillfully dominate  
er Asian countries, but with methods  
ferent from military invasion. #



## IVERSARIES OF CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

umn brought a flurry of celebrations  
many of the Christian institutions in  
an. Among them were Seiwa Joshi Dai-  
tu in Kobe and Seibi Gakuen in Yokohama,  
th of them celebrating the 100th anni-  
rsary of their founding.

### *Seiwa Joshi Daigaku*

th its focus on women's Christian Edu-  
cation, Seiwa has inherited a rich history  
both the Methodist and Congregational  
aditions. Their observances, beginning  
Nov. 2, featured a display and slide  
resentation of the history of the school  
d of education in Japan. Among the  
ests who were welcomed to the celebra-  
on were HIROSE Hamako, former principal,  
d retired missionaries Pearl McCAIN,  
lly CARROLL, Gertrude FEELEY, and Helen  
LLHOUSE.

### *Seibi Gakuen*

Seibi Gakuen's four-day observance, begin-  
ing on Oct. 30, included exhibits, con-  
erts and a mass celebration with the en-  
ire student body at the Kanagawa Prefec-  
ural Hall in Yokohama. The school for

girls, kindergarten through high school  
welcomed Helen BARNES, a former mission-  
ary whose aunt, Olive HODGES was the prin-  
cipal of the school from 1902 to 1938.

### *Miyagi Gakuin*

On Oct. 25, Miyagi Gakuin, in Sendai, cel-  
ebrated the opening of its new campus a  
short distance from the city. The old  
campus, located a few minutes walk from  
Sendai Station since 1924, is memorialized  
in a part of the stained glass window of  
the new chapel. Miyagi, a university for  
women, now has ample space for facilities  
from kindergarten through college. The  
red brick buildings nestling among lakes  
and woodlands were built to take full ad-  
vantage of the natural surroundings.  
President HAYASAKA Reigo reaffirmed the  
school's dedication to Christian educa-  
tion, symbolized in its emblem by an open  
Bible and a dove of peace surrounded by  
a circle of fall bush clover.

### *Airin Gakuen*

In Fukugawa, Tokyo, Airin Gakuen cele-  
brated thirty years of service to the  
community on Oct. 19. The work was begun  
by the Rev. TAKAHASHI Reiji immediately  
after World War II on the banks of the  
river near Ochanomizu station to give  
aid and encouragement to the many people  
left destitute by the war. It now has a  
multi-story building among the warehouses  
of Edo Ward, housing a multiplicity of  
services to people of all age levels.  
One of the continuing strengths of the  
work has been its ecumenical character,  
with Catholics and Protestants from many  
denominations working side by side. The  
beginnings and growth of Airin Gakuen  
have been written in a book, "The Shadow  
of His Hand," by Rev. Kenneth C. HEN-  
DRICKS, retired missionary. #

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### 2001 KANJI BY JOSEPH R. DeROO

Good news for all who are looking for a  
consistent explanation of all the Toyo  
kanji and many more! Father Jos DeRoo,  
CICM, who has been teaching kanji for 12  
years at the Franciscan Language School  
in Roppongi, has published a practical  
workbook for learning kanji. A reference  
number to Nelson's dictionary, the kanji's  
reading(s) and its meaning(s) are given,  
"which uses traditional (Chinese) explan-  
ations combined with graphemic analysis  
for consistency within the present Japane-  
se Kanji situation." Orders should be  
made to Fr. De Roo, Inst. of Japanese  
Studies, Roppongi 4-2-39, Minato-ku, Tokyo  
106. Furikae number: Tokyo 5-72412



After attending "The Tourism Workshop" sponsored by the Christian Conference of Asia from September 12-25, TAKAZATO Suzuyo and MATSUI Yayori are now fully involved in programs designed to interpret the problems related to organized prostitution tourism being sold to Japanese men.

The common stance taken by male journalists is one in which prostitution tourism is seen as an economic phenomenon that will continue as long as economic disparities exist between men in the rich countries and women in the poor countries.

Matsui continues to write a numbers of articles reporting what she experienced in the workshop and at the Ramada Hotel in Manila where she witnessed more than 300 Japanese men seeking and retaining prostitutes. She says that such pleasure tours are forms of rampant sexual invasion.

October 22 and 29 DOI Takako, a Socialist Diet representative, took up the issue of prostitution tourism in two sessions of the Japanese House of Representatives' Foreign Affairs Committee approaching the problem from the point of view of Japan's international prestige. Doi based her questions on statements on prostitution tourism prepared by Filipino groups (See JCAN Aug. '80) and requested that the Japanese government take more effective measures in this regard than the mere notifications that have been sent in the past to the Japan Association of Travel Agents.

The president of JATA, KANEMATSU Manabu was called into the October 29 committee session and Doi requested that the travel agents become more responsible in their planning of tour programs to other Asian countries. Kanematsu told the committee that travel agents are not subject to license revocation under the present system even if such agents are found to be committing acts which are obviously wrong.

Criticism from the Philippines against Japanese sex tours comes as voices are raised in protest relative to the moral issues involved and the issue of life styles in Japan.#

The question, "What is Christianity?" asked not only by Christians in Japan also by people who may feel fear and flict within the present society. This is shown in the unexpected numbers of people going to see movies on Christian themes, such as "Mother Teresa" and "of Nazareth." Christian writers like Shusaku, SONO Ayako and OGAWA Kunio have been read widely by the Japanese in recent years. Publications related to Christianity have increased in number as though Japan is becoming a Christian nation.

Series of books related to Christianity occupy booksellers stalls: 14 volumes "Gendai Kirisutokyo Shiso Gyosho" (Present Christian Thought), 10 volumes of "Tillich Chosakushu" (Works of Paul Tillich), 15 volumes of Bultmanns' works, 20 volumes of "Cambridge Kyuyaku Seisho Chukai" (Cambridge O.T. Commentary).

Responding to the desire to know more about Christ in history, commentaries on the Bible and Biblical doctrine have been published increasingly; it may be for the same reason these classics are also being rediscovered. 15 volumes of "Augustine Chosakushu", one volume of the major writings of St. Anselm of Canterbury and 7 volumes of Pascal.

Various publishers have brought out books on the history of Christianity such as 3 volumes by Yamakawa publishing company and 11 volumes by Kodansha publishing company. Books on Christianity in Japan include titles such as "Kirisuto Dochak Ron" on the subject of the hidden Christians by KATSUI Yoshinori. Shinkyo Shuppan "Uchimura Kanzo" contains 57 volumes and the same title by Iwanami Shoten is 38 volumes.

Recent books on the scholars of Christianity in Japan are "Ariga Tetsutaro Chosakushu" (Sobunsha, 5 volumes), "Kan Tateo Chosaku shu" (Misuzu, 5 volumes), and "Sekine Masao Chosakushu" (Shinchi, 5 volumes). "Nippon Protestant Kirisuto Kyoshi" by Dohi Akio and "Nippon Kirisuto Kyokai Chinsei Chukai Kiroku" offer historical backgrounds on Christianity in Japan.

by ISOMI Tatsunori  
Asahi Shinbun Oct. 27

*A letter has been received from L. Yaw Ba, Youth Department Director of the Burma Council of Churches, expressing appreciation for JCAN. He would like to regularly receive 10 gift copies for his Youth Department. Can anyone help? .....*



## OF URGENCY SURROUNDS WORLDWIDE CHURCH PTS TO SAVE KIM DAE-JUNG'S LIFE

gripping news continues to pour in from regarding the fate of Mr. KIM Dae-Christian and former presidential candidate in the Republic of Korea. Sentenced to death Sept. 17 by a military court, he was allowed only one defense witness, Mr. Kim, who had his death sentence upheld by a military appellate court on Nov. 3, in a rushed trial allowing for no defense witnesses at all. A new sense of urgency has taken root among Christians in Japan and worldwide concerned with democracy in Korea. Mr. Kim's fate as it relates thereto -- there are clear signs that Mr. Kim may be executed within the next six weeks.

first trial, running from August 14 to Sept. 17, has been described as running according to a pre-set scenario. The prosecution made little attempt to prove its case, relying instead on the government's control of the nation's mass media to "convict" Mr. Kim and his co-defendants in the press. The defendants' clear rebuttals in the courtroom went unreported, and the government even attempted to censor the international press reports. The result was an outcry from numerous nations over the shocking sentences, and calls for a fair and open retrial.

In comparison, the appellate court, running from Oct. 24 to Nov. 3, was even less fair. A heart-rending appeal received from the families of the defendants, details of the rushed appellate procedure emerge sharply. The government's primary witness had no relation whatsoever with the events in question, and was himself in a vulnerable position -- being a surrendered north Korean agent -- leading observers to seriously doubt the veracity of his testimony. The defendants' requests for defense witnesses were refused, and when the defendants persisted in making their requests, even their government-appointed lawyers refused to listen. Finally, when the defendants chose not to attend the trial as a show of protest, their lawyers proceeded with their "defense" -- all defendants were defended in the space of a few minutes. Sentencing, in turn, took less than ten minutes on November 3. By latest counts, over 100 political detainees are conducting a hunger fast, calling for a fair trial, the rescinding of martial law, and the release of Mr. Kim Dae-jung.

Although legal procedures allow for a further appeal to the nation's Supreme Court, Mr. Kim has initiated this second appeal, and objections have mounted over the chances of a further ruling emerging from even the ostensibly neutral Supreme Court. This court was itself organized in preparation for the trial of Mr. Kim.

Fears for Mr. Kim's life have deepened with the revelation that on Oct. 25 a high-level meeting was called by the president's secretary for information, the KCIA, and the Ministry of Culture and Information, to which the editors of the nation's leading papers were called. Their orders: initiate a "popular campaign" calling for the carrying out of the death sentence against Kim.

Christians in Japan and worldwide have reacted with alarm at these blatant attempts to eliminate Kim Dae-jung from the realm of south Korean politics. Over 260 Americans resident in Japan signed a letter of concern and protest addressed to U.S. Secretary of State Edmund Muskie, calling for clear, strong signals from the U.S. on behalf of Mr. Kim, and supportive of a renewed democratic process in south Korea.

A second relay of prayer services among Japanese churches is underway, from Nov. 12 to 28, with a candle-light procession and joint Protestant-Catholic prayer service held on Friday, Nov. 14. Similarly, prayer services and informative public meetings are scheduled in numerous American cities.

Pres. Chun Du-hwan is reported to be most fearful of the power of prayer, cognizant that his earthly power is dwarfed by the Power from above. Whether he will humbly recognize the price he must pay for bearing false witness cannot be predicted, but we are called to prayer on behalf of the falsely-accused -- Mr. Kim and those on trial with him -- and for Pres. Chun as well. May our actions be urgent and sincere, in a spirit of bringing His peace on earth. #

## YASUKUNI SHRINE ISSUE

October 28 Prime Minister, SUZUKI Zenko answered a question from a Socialist member INABA Seiichi related to the Yasukuni Shrine issue: "If the purpose of Yasukuni Shinto Shrine is for national protection, the nation should participate in the management of the shrine and in its support with national funds. In order to do this it is necessary for the shrine to eliminate its religious aspect."

The Prime Minister's answer emphasized the non-religious character of the shrine, following the Constitutional provision of the separation of religion and state.

The Yasukuni Shrine is presently a legal body whose stated purpose is to carry on Shinto religious activities. #





## THE KYODAN'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY

About 400 delegates, observers and international guests were congregated for the 21st General Assembly of the Kyodan (United Church of Christ in Japan), held at Hakone on November 5-7. The theme was "Mission - For Its New Perspective." Both Rev. USHIROKU Toshio and Rev. KISHIMOTO Yoichi were re-elected as moderator and vice-moderator for the next two years. Twenty-seven new members (only one woman) were elected to the Executive Committee.

Discussion of subjects related to the constitution of the Kyodan will be continued at the 22nd General Assembly in 1982. Along with the establishment of the Buraku Liberation Center, various issues related to the unification of the Okinawa churches and the United Church of Christ in Japan on Feb. 25, 1969, will be decided on by the Executive Committee. The agenda protesting prostitution tourism was supported by the Assembly, which states such tours are a representation of Japan's economic invasion and discrimination against the people. The Executive Committee will discuss the specific methods for grappling with this problem. The Assembly also passed the motion to send a letter of support to Korean churches where people's rights are suppressed and start a movement to raise money for the churches under oppression.

The death of 62 pastors and 6 missionaries during the period of October 1978 to September 1980 were commemorated. In the fall of 1980, 42 ordained pastors and 10 licensed preachers who passed examinations were recognized in the Assembly.

A communion service was held in the morning of the last day.#

## MY VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY

by KAJIWARA Yuki, Kanagawa Ken,  
Fifth Grade

When I was in the 2nd grade, I met a physically handicapped girl for the first time. I remember that I was worried about how she could get to school. When I was in the 3rd grade, I was asked to go home with this girl, but I was not sure what to do with her. She didn't understand what I said nor could I understand whatever she was trying to say to me. So as I taught her a few words such as: "school", "pencil", "desk", "sun"...we became good friends. When I became a fifth grader,

I was so happy that she could say my name although it was not quite right. She has added more words to our conversational vocabulary and we still go home together. The other day I gave her a little paper crane, which I had made. She looked happy and appreciated it very much. It was as if she had received a prize and she handled it like her most precious treasure. I thought then that it would be a much better world if people were more warm-hearted like my friend. My heart has been filled with happiness since I have become a good friend of hers. I will continue to be her helper on the way home from school and try to make her more popular at school.#

(taken from a booklet *Judai no Volunteer Karsudo*)

## JAPANESE CHRISTIAN NOVELISTS

NCC's SHOJI Tsutomu recently had a conversation with Ōe Kenzaburo, a famous Japanese novelist. Ōe is not a Christian, but the two found themselves in agreement on several points.

Ōe: I am not impressed by Japanese Christian literature because it emphasizes in a monotonous way the easy availability of the grace of God. It makes God's grace seem too easy and omits a sense of justice and fear of God. Japanese Christian novelists write too directly about God thereby removing the sense of awe that one should feel for the divinity of God and for Jesus Christ. Many Japanese Christian novelists lack a sense of ethics. There is no criticism of human sin. All is accepted. This is particularly true of ENDO Shusaku and SONO Ayako.

Shoji: I feel the same way. In fact, when reading Endo and Sono I often have a bad feeling because their understanding of grace makes it come too easily. Christianity is very abstract if we lack a sense of ethics. Endo has an understanding of grace that is very Japanese because it reflects the sense of a mother's love which is typically Japanese.

Ōe: Yes, and I believe very strongly that Japanese Christian novelists write too often about the life of Christ. Christian writers in other countries do not do this nearly as much. For example, Endo should restrict himself from writing such a book as *The Life of Jesus* as he did. Endo is a novelist and not a theologian and should not depict God directly but should concentrate on searching for God through human beings. A sense of distance should be kept between God and man and a feeling of God's wonder is of utmost importance.